

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 554

By Overbey

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the members of the First Christian Church in Maryville on the occasion of the church's 100th anniversary.

WHEREAS, the churches of Tennessee are crucial elements contributing to the social and spiritual health of our State, and the members of this General Assembly are pleased to recognize significant milestones in the lives of those communities of faith; and

WHEREAS, the good people of the First Christian Church comprise one such congregation, and this year they are celebrating the church's 100 years of service to the Lord and their community; and

WHEREAS, this venerable religious institution traces its rich history to January 18, 1912, when a group of twenty-five committed Christians and stalwart servants of the Almighty began worshiping together in an old store building on the corner of Ellis Avenue and Church Street in Maryville; and

WHEREAS, with congregational input and expectant prayer, the forward-thinking leaders of this small flock purchased a plot of land on 400 South Court Street in 1949, and the devoted members rallied together to construct a new house of worship almost entirely by themselves; and

WHEREAS, once a tiny community of faith, the thriving congregation has continued to flourish throughout its storied history, adding an educational wing in 1984 to accommodate its growth in membership; and

WHEREAS, the congregants of the First Christian Church have been blessed with spiritual leadership from a great many preachers who have faithfully guided the church through the many years of its existence, including Harold Ray, Casey Hancock, and Roy Row; and

WHEREAS, today, the church does not employ a regular minister, instead but enjoys the sage direction of their five dedicated elders: Greg Pitner, Terry Ray, Robbie Waters, Bob Bell, and John Engle, each of whom faithfully guide the tight-knit family of believers through the trials and tribulations of life; and

WHEREAS, on January 15, 2012, these humble servants of the Lord joined together in a special centennial service, in which Dr. David Eubanks, former president of Johnson Bible College (now Johnson Bible University), masterfully preached the Word of God as the guest speaker; and

WHEREAS, to commemorate this momentous occasion, a small, homemade time capsule from 1957 was opened and displayed for all to see, and a new time capsule, featuring mementos from current members, was dedicated and installed in the building's cornerstone for future generations of believers; and

WHEREAS, a powerful tool in the service of the Kingdom of God, the First Christian Church is one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, the First Christian Church has stood on the rock-solid foundation of Christian belief, service, and love for 100 years, serving as a bastion of faith and outreach to the people of Maryville, the surrounding area, and the world; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we join in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the First Christian Church, thank the good people of this remarkable congregation and their ministers for their notable service to their Lord and the State of Tennessee, and wish them much continued success and happiness in the years to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.